

**CADY Corner 9/24**  
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## **EAT DINNER WITH YOUR CHILD TONIGHT!**

One simple thing you can do tonight to prevent drug abuse.... have dinner with your children.

Hectic work schedules, after-school activities and time spent with school friends often interfere with dinnertime. Yet research by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University consistently finds that the more often children eat dinner with their families, the less likely they are to smoke, drink or use illegal drugs.

Created by CASA in 2001, "Family Day - A Day to Eat Dinner with Your Children" is a national effort to promote family dinners as an effective way to reduce substance abuse among children and teens. **2009 Family Day is on Monday, September 28th.**

Family Day emphasizes the importance of regular family activities and encourages Americans to make family dinners a regular occurrence. Parental engagement is the single most potent weapon in preventing substance abuse among youth! Family Day is not just for families. It is a day for all to celebrate, including businesses, unions, religious organizations and community groups. The symbolic act of regular family meals should be promoted and celebrated inside and outside the home throughout the year.

For more than a decade, CASA has been conducting a survey of the attitudes of teens and those, like parents, who influence them most. While other surveys measure the extent of substance abuse in the population, the CASA survey seeks to identify factors that increase or diminish the likelihood that teens will smoke, drink, use illegal drugs or abuse prescription drugs. We believe that parents, armed with this knowledge, can help their teens grow up drug free.

Substance abuse prevention begins with adults. *A child who gets through age 21 without smoking, abusing alcohol or using illegal drugs is virtually certain never to do so.* And no one has more power to prevent kids from using substances than parents. There are no silver bullets; unfortunately, the tragedy of a child's substance abuse can strike any family. But one factor that does more to reduce teens' substance abuse risk than almost any other is parental engagement, and one of the simplest and most effective ways for parents to be engaged in teens' lives is by having frequent family dinners.

For more information and tips about how to talk to your kids about drug and alcohol abuse, visit CADY's web site at [www.cadyinc.org](http://www.cadyinc.org), or give us a call at 536-9793.